

# Who Is Worthy

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon emphasizes the worthiness of Christ to open the sealed book and the assurance of God's sovereign plan for humanity.*

**Duration:** 34:25

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Revelation 4:2, Revelation 5:2-3, Revelation 5:5-6, Revelation 5:9, Revelation 5:13

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher acknowledges the impossibility of fully expounding upon the glorious portion of Scripture in just twenty minutes. However, he aims to highlight certain key points from the Book of Revelation that can serve as guiding peaks for further exploration. The fourth chapter depicts God seated on a throne in the midst of a sea of glass, with a lamb beside Him, allowing access to His glory. The fifth chapter introduces a book with seven seals, and a proclamation is made to find someone worthy to open it and reveal God's plan. The preacher encourages the audience to not only listen to his message but also to read and meditate upon the Book of Revelation to truly grasp its profound truths.

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## Transcript

Fifth chapter of the book of Revelation. I urge you not only to hear it read, but I urge you to read it and to meditate upon it, following this service until the lovely truth of it becomes yours. It's not just enough to hear what I may say about it.

I trust that the message this evening, as brief as it will be, will have the effect of laying upon your heart a deep desire to acquaint yourself with this precious portion of his word. Now hear it and endeavor to visualize it. Try to see what you're hearing.

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not. Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having

seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousands and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea and all that are in them heard I saying, blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen.

And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth forever and ever. Anyone who would propose to expound this glorious portion of scripture in twenty minutes would cut out a task impossible of performance, and I shall not endeavor to do that which is so obviously impossible. But I do trust that bringing from this portion certain salient points as mountain peaks may serve to blaze a trail through the scripture that you at your leisure can walk and in the walking find that it is strewn with diamonds and precious to your soul.

The fourth chapter sets forth God in the midst of the throne, on a throne in a sea of glass, the unapproachable ineffable glorious God that could only be reached because there was a lamb beside him in the throne. And in this chapter we have now the adumbration and the exaltation of that lamb, the setting forth of Christ in the splendor of all he is. Now remember, this book that we are reading is the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In it we learn about the Antichrist. In it we learn about the four horsemen. In it we learn about the beast that rises up out of the sea.

In it we learn about things that are to come and evil that is to pass upon the earth. But this is not the revelation of Antichrist or the revelation of the Satan or the revelation of the tribulation. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And thus at the fourth chapter you find that God is set forth in his power and in his sovereignty. And in the fifth chapter the son of God is set forth in all of his indescribable glory. In other words, God wants you to realize that he is still on the throne.

I saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. Who is speaking? John, the beloved apostle of our Lord Jesus, the one that had been at his nets when Christ called him, the one that had been intimate in the fellowship of the three, Peter, James, and John. It was that John.

The one that leaned upon his bosom, the one that was beside him in the night when he offered the sop to Judas, asking, is it I? And of course the Lord assuring him that it wasn't. This John that at the foot of the cross heard the Lord say to Mary, son behold thy mother, mother behold thy son. This same John, now

nearly ninety years of age, on the isle of Patmos says, I saw him that sat upon the throne.

And John tells us that he has seen now the model and the method of God's government in the world. Because he saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book, a book written and a book sealed. I submit to you first that this book is the record of all that God has designed and fixed and resolved and determined to do.

Do you worship a sovereign God? If you do not, then tonight your heart must be failing you for fear of things to come upon the earth. Do you worship one who sits upon the throne and does all things after the counsel of his own will? Unless you do, your heart must be terrorized at the headlines of the newspaper. But John saw one sitting upon the throne holding in his hand a book.

And that book is the predetermined purpose of God. Everything that is happening and everything that will happen and everything that has happened has had its proper entry in the book that John saw. We must understand this.

You must realize that the book that is happening today that seems like a masterly game of chess played by diabolical genius that are determined to destroy and hinder and thwart the purpose of God is nothing of the sort. For God holds the hearts of kings in his hand. And John saw a book.

And in that book is written all the current events that are ever to take place. God, John saw one who sat upon a throne who had written a book and had sealed that book. And that book contained all that was to transpire upon the earth.

It is in his right hand. The right hand of the one upon the throne is the hand of authority. It's the hand that reaches out to knight the one that's to be honored and to condemn the one that's to be slain.

This book has been authorized by him. He is the one that's seen to the great care in its writing. And he is the one that holds it in his right hand and will see to it that it is executed according to his purpose.

This book is sealed. John saw that the seal of the book signified that its contents was known only to him that sat upon the throne and to only to others as he cared to reveal it. The fact that the book was extended, the fact that the book was held out was the revelation that God who sat upon the throne was prepared to reveal that which was to come the past.

But the fact that it was sealed with seven seals or in succession seven seals marking off the separate departments of the book indicated that it would not be revealed all at once but only according to the sovereign timetable. He will allow it to be opened at the right time by the right person for the right purpose. He holds it in his hand.

May I say again that verse that I have used, known unto God and to him alone are his works from the beginning of the world. It is to the glory of God to know all that's to transpire. Would you worship one who was not omniscient, who knew only something of what was going to happen? No, you couldn't worship him.

For you know some things that are going to happen. You know some things or at least you anticipate that some things will happen. If God were simply an exaggerated enlarged you, you couldn't worship him.

But the fact is that God is not troubled by partial knowledge as you are and I am. We are troubled by the fact that we see so little and know so little and have to form our judgments with so little information, so impartially received. But God knows all things and God is omniscient and has all knowledge.

And therefore we, it is to be understood that in this that God has set here, he has set his purpose and has sealed it and has concealed it. It is to his glory. He doesn't need to tell anybody anything, but he does.

He does because he's gracious and he does because his purpose always is for the best interests of men and for the glory of himself. I would have you know that everything in this book, everything that's there has been written by God. In other words, all that God has is, has gone into all that God has determined and decreed.

There are those who perhaps feel that God does not take this kind of a place in the events of man that he doesn't determine and he doesn't choose. For they would say from their point of view, this would be a cruel fatalism. And then they would cite certain beasts and monsters of history who in their cruelty have caused indescribable suffering in the world.

And they would say, did God ordain this one? And did God ordain that? Well, I submit to you that everything that God has ordained and everything that he has sealed in this book, he has done in all that he is. In his omniscience, he knows everything that is going to happen. In his wisdom, he knows what is best for that purpose which he has held as the paramount purpose of all things.

In his love, he has designed that which will be to the good of men and to the glory of himself. In his power, he has set himself to accomplish all that he has determined. You cannot imagine God acting in sovereignty apart from wisdom nor moving in authority apart from love.

Never. He acts in all that he is. And therefore, you can be sure that when you do have all the seals open and everything that is needed to be understood from this book, that it is going to be a reflection of the character of God.

It is good. This you must understand. As you view the future, unknown to you, the enemy of God and of your soul will say something like this.

You can't trust God. Oh, this is the source of all fear. This is the source of all grief.

This is the source of all disintegration of life and of character. And every breakdown that has ever happened with a Christian has happened because somehow they have succeeded in listening to the voice of the enemy that says, God doesn't love you as much as he says he does. This isn't true.

He knew that there would be that church that would go through tribulation. He knew there would be those saints that would die for their faith. He knew that there would be those that would go home to his presence by way of martyrdom.

He knew that. But such a death in martyrdom wasn't bad, for it simply gave them the opportunity of instantaneously bypassing all the years of suffering and agony that age would bring and brought them immediately into the presence of God. My friend, nothing can ever happen to me or to you in the will of God that's bad because God is good.

And the will of God is good. And you can reach out though blind you may be to the future, and weak you may be in the present, and you can reach out and embrace the future and bring it to you and love it, as long as it's the will of God. Because God can only will what is good for those that trust him.

Whatever that future may be, whatever that future may hold, and however ignorant men may evaluate it, it still remains that if you are in the will of God, then everything is good and everything is right. Oh, to worship the will of God. Frederick Faber said, I worship thee, sweet will of God.

In all thy ways adored every day I live, I seem to love thee more and more. Thou wert my Savior's rule those three and thirty years. Yes, indeed.

And this is what we find here written in the book, concealed from the future, but you do not need to know, only that you know him. As far as your part in that future is concerned, anything that he has written that has reference to you or that pertains to you is good. Oh, to be invulnerable.

To be invulnerable to everything but the displeasing God. To be immune to every grief, but to grieve him. To be to the place where you want nothing and seek nothing and desire nothing but the will of God.

Put you in that place where you can be more than a conqueror. Where nothing is precious but his smile and nothing is dear but his purpose. Nothing has meaning but his plan.

Then, when you have come to that, you've come to the place where rest is to be unbroken. But in addition to the fact that you can trust the book even when it's sealed, you still need to recognize that God desired it to be opened. And proclamation was made, John heard it, who is worthy to open the book? Who is worthy to discover the plan of God? Who is worthy to declare the plan of God? Anyone under the earth, anyone in hell, any demon, Satan himself and all of the princes of darkness? The call that John heard was, is there anyone under the earth that thinks he's worthy to open the book? And the answer was silent.

And then the angel, the strong angels pointed toward the heavens and said, is there anyone in heaven that's worthy to open the book? And the other angelic beings stood in silence. And then John said in the earth, is there any of the wise men of earth that are all worthy to open the book and to declare what's going to happen in the future? And they stood silent. And John said, my heart wept for there was no one in hell or in heaven or on earth that was worthy to open the book.

No one worthy to open the seals. And then said he, I wept much. You see, John had seen something of God and he wanted to know more.

This always characterizes the person that knows God. And it is to be understood, therefore, that having seen the Lord high and lifted up and having seen something of his gracious purpose, John should be insatiable. And this will characterize you as well.

When God shows you that he has a plan for your life and a plan for the times and a plan for the ages, you're going to say, oh, that I knew all. And you might today weep much because you know so little. But the elder came, an elder.

I like that. He speaks of this, speaks of the church, for it was the church that had the testimony of the one that was worthy to open the book. The elder stood and said, weep not.

God had used his church as the means of continuing the testimony that there was born of Mary in Bethlehem's village, a babe who was none other than Emmanuel, God come in the flesh. It was the church that had continued the testimony that that babe was the long awaited Messiah, the anointed of God, the one that had been sent for the purpose of redeeming a lost race. It was in Nazareth that he grew to young manhood and spent the most of the years of his life.

And the church has this testimony. It was in Jordan that he was presented in. God broke the silence of 30 years and said, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

Hear ye him. And it's the church that makes this declaration. And it is the church that has the testimony of the life and ministry and works of Christ.

And it's the church that explains that he died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. And it is the church that has the testimony that God raised him from the dead, sealing forever the fact that the death of Jesus Christ, the righteous had been accepted in behalf of sinful men. And it's the church, the bride that reaches out its hands and to a race of sinful men says, whosoever will may come.

It's this committed to the church and everything that Jesus Christ did for a lost race. He committed to his body, the church, and an elder speaks and John sees him. And an elder says by his speaking, the church has the testimony, John.

Here it is. Jesus Christ behold the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David. He has prevailed to open the book.

And this is the testimony of the church, that this same Jesus wasn't just a good teacher as some would have him, a martyr dying for his belief as some would say. But this same Jesus was God, very God of very God. This is the doc, this is the teaching that devils hate.

This is the teaching at which you test the truth and the validity of statements. When someone comes to your door seeking to preach Christ to you and the declaration is made that they have truth, the question that you ask is who is Jesus Christ? They will answer it so many of them that represent the cults with various different terms. But only that is the testimony of the church that says that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh, very God of very God.

And it's this by which the testimony was to be given. It's the test used when some inspired utterance was given as in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 when someone purported to speak in word of prophecy or in some other inspired utterance and it had any reflection upon the person of Jesus Christ, it was to be understood that it was of the enemy. John writing in 1 John said, we are not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits for every spirit that confesses not that Jesus is come in the flesh is not of God.

And this is the testimony of the church that Jesus Christ was the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David. He was the one who came as a king and as a sovereign, but he also came as a savior. He was the God perfectly gloriously God and man totally and completely man, the God man in order that he might provide full and complete and perfect redemption.

And he is the one that's prevailed to open the books. Then the next thing that John sees is the revelation of Jesus Christ in the midst of the throne. And I beheld in low, in the midst of the throne, in the midst of the throne, there was the sea of glass and one that set upon it as a visage was like unto the sardine in the Jasper stone couldn't be described.

But now John says, I saw one in the midst of the throne. It was the son of God. Oh, I'm so glad tonight that there's a man in the glory.

There's someone that's just like you, just like me. There's a man there in a body like unto your save a resurrection body. And in his hands are nail wounds and in his side is a spear wound and in his feet are the places the spikes of torn.

And he is there at the right hand of the throne of God in the midst of the throne and all authority in heaven and earth is committed unto him. And the angels bow before him and worship him. But oh, I'm so glad that John not only saw him there, but he also saw the elders were there and the beasts were there.

These are the elders speak to us of the redeemed of all ages of the Old Testament and the new and the beast speak to us of that full and complete and perfect testimony of the one who was the eagle, the heavenly dweller who became the sinless man in purity that he might become the calf or the ox and sacrifice and then become the lion as you have in the fourfold vision of Ezekiel and of revelation. And these beasts testify to the perfect ministry of Christ. So there is Christ in the midst of the throne.

There is this perfect testimony to his finished work. And there are the redeemed, the elders, that great company of the redeemed. And John sees them.

And what is he saying by this? He is saying that as Jesus Christ said, all authority in heaven and earth is given unto me that the current events of 1961 are included. Oh, I'm glad of that. And his sovereign purpose is still being realized for out of every kindred and tribe and tongue and nation and people, he is still moving to gather to himself those whom he would redeem.

And the purpose of this redeeming love is to bring them into that company where they're going to worship the lamb upon the throne. What is the testimony then? What is the testimony of Revelation, the fifth chapter? It is this, that Jesus Christ has prevailed, that he's in the throne, that he is there in the midst of it reigning in behalf of the triune God, that all of the attributes of God are now manifest in a human person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They're all being manifest through one that is a man.

And that everything that's going to take place in the future, all that John is about to see, is not going to stop that which is the primary goal of all things. What did Christ say? Glorify thou me with the glory I had with thee before the world was. What does John hear? Listen to it.

And I beheld and I heard the voices of many angels around about the throne and the beasts and the elders and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands saying, worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. As our Lord's prayer then answered, glorify thou me ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands out of every kindred tribe and tongue and nation. Worthy is the lamb that was slain.

Do you see? Whatever happens on this old earth, whatever takes place in the years to come, John has told us that nothing, nothing can rob the Son of God of the spoils of his suffering. He's still on the throne. He still reigns.

He still rules. And all that Khrushchev can do, all of the kings of the earth and their madness can do, cannot rob Jesus Christ of the glory that the Father promised him. John saw it.

We rejoice in it. The future, the future is just as bright as God is great, as God is glorious. We stand tonight on this grounds where we can say to anyone that's here, you come with sin.

He died for sinners. You come with grief. He tasted it and touched it and experienced for it.

You come in need. He loved you. And this one that's in the midst of the throne says, whosoever will, they come and take you the water of life freely.

And if you're willing to come and throw down the arms of your rebellion, cast yourself at his nailed, pierced feet, own him as Lord and as Savior. This same Jesus will come in to cleanse and to purge and to purify, give you a new heart and a new nature and make you a new creation. And in that day, you can be found among that number, singing the song of Moses and the lamb unto him who loved us and washed us in his blood.

Is Christ in you? Examine yourself for this same one that was in the midst of the throne is to be in the midst of the saint. For it's Christ in you, the hope of glory. Examine yourselves.

Prove your own selves. Know you're not your own selves. That Christ, this same Jesus be in you, except you be reprobate.

Christ in you. If Christ is in you, then you're in him. And one day you'll be in the presence of the redeemed.

You can be. Are you? Let us pray. Seal now to our hearts, our father, thy word.

This is the testimony that we're carrying to the ends of the earth, that the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has prevailed to open the book and that he has now in his hands the future of all men. And he has said that if we will confess and forsake our sins and repent and cast ourselves at his feet, he will wash from us all stain in his blood, cleanse us from all impurity and give us new hearts and new natures like unto his own. Yeah, he himself will become our life.

But this same Jesus shall one day be seated, not as a lamb in love, outstretched invitation saying come and receive life, but will be seated as a lion upon the throne. And men will call for the rock star, hide them from the face of the wrath of the lamb. Oh God, let it not be that anyone in this company shall so miss and spurn all the offers of grace as to in that day to be found among the impenitent, the reprobate and the lost.

We plead tonight for the spirit of God to bring to the feet of the worthy one every heart, including the one that's never bowed or knelt before. Oh, might there be that breaking in humility and grief to know the cleansing of the precious blood and the glorious salvation that Jesus Christ died to bring. Our heads bowed and our eyes closed.

Think of the words of this song. Pass me not, oh gentle savior. Hear my humble cry.

While on others thou art calling, do not pass me by. And if you will but want him to come in and open your heart's door to him, he'll come in to save you, cleanse you, make you whole. Other those who will say tonight by uplifted hand, yes, I see him, the lamb upon the throne.

I haven't honored him. I haven't received him. I haven't loved him.

But tonight I know that he deserves my heart and I come to him in all my sin, with all my need and tell him that I want him to come in to save me and cleanse me and to make me whole. I'm opening my heart's door

to him. Would you raise your hand? Anyone? Anywhere? I'm opening my heart's door to him.

Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Come in today, come in to stay. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

Simple little children's chorus is enough to savingly unite you with Christ, if you mean it with your heart. Let us stand for the benediction. And now unto him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and honor, dominion and majesty now and forever.

Amen.

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